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GETTING READY TO WASH

--For Clean Clothes

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Division of Home Economics, Federal Extension Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SORTING AND INSPECTING

Sort and check over all clothes before you put them into the washer. This will help you keep your clothes looking nice longer. You will be able to choose the right water temperature for different fabrics. You will also be able to get stains out before they can set.

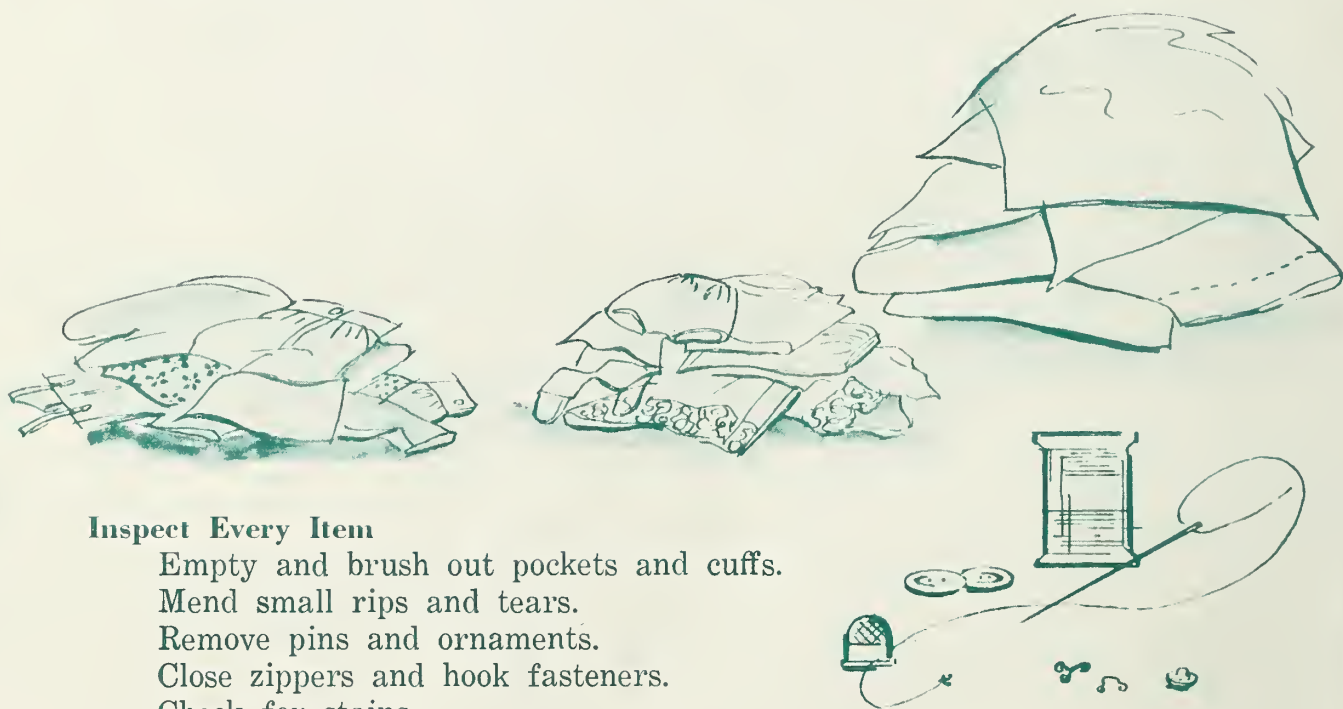
Sort Clothes into Groups for Washing

Test colored clothes to see if the colors run. If they run, wash them separately or with other clothes the same color.

To keep white clothes white, don't wash them with colored clothes.

If you have a big washing, sort clothes even more.

- Don't wash lightly soiled clothes with heavily soiled clothing.
- Sort clothes that shed lint from those that don't. Separate delicate items from sturdy ones.



Inspect Every Item

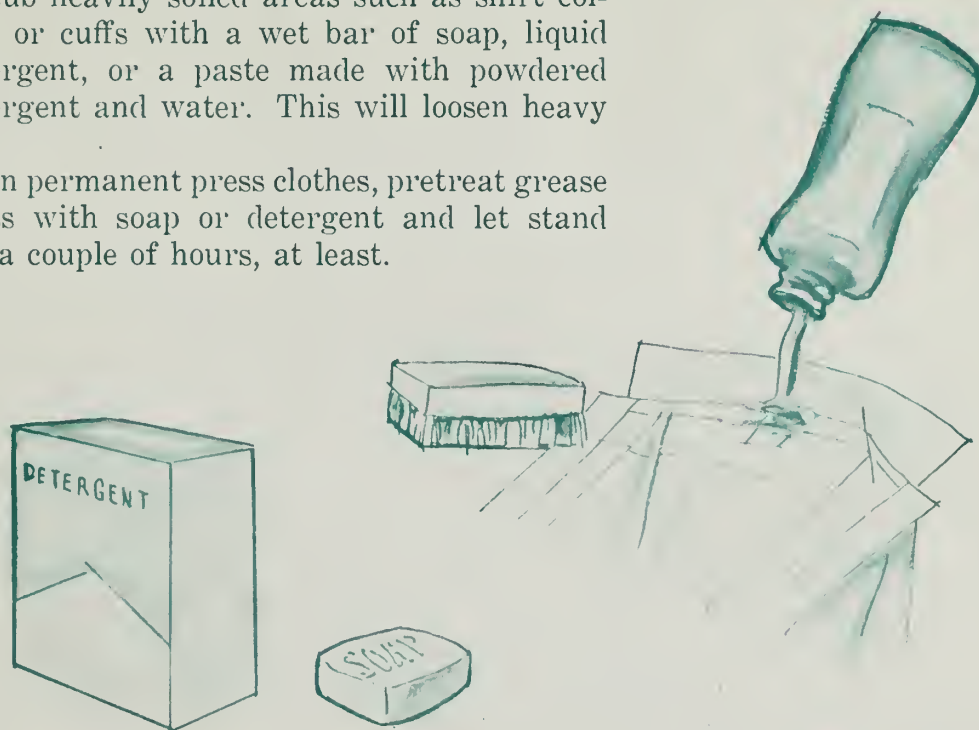
Empty and brush out pockets and cuffs.
Mend small rips and tears.
Remove pins and ornaments.
Close zippers and hook fasteners.
Check for stains.

PRETREATING AND REMOVING STAINS

Pretreat (before washing)

Rub heavily soiled areas such as shirt collars or cuffs with a wet bar of soap, liquid detergent, or a paste made with powdered detergent and water. This will loosen heavy soil.

On permanent press clothes, pretreat grease spots with soap or detergent and let stand for a couple of hours, at least.

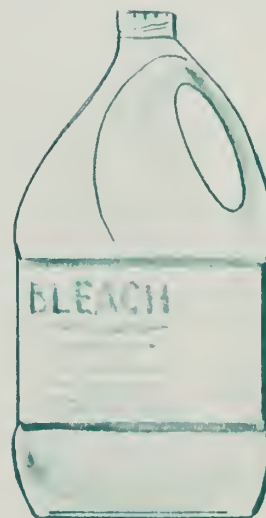


Remove Stains

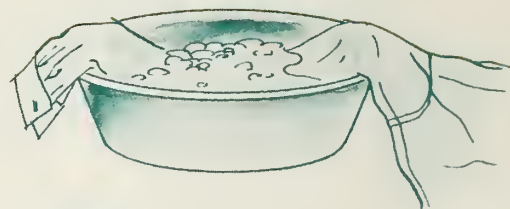
- The sooner you treat a stain, the easier it is to remove.
- You can usually remove these stains by pre-treating with soap or detergent:

Cosmetics	Oil
Crayon	Grass
Grease	Milk
Ice cream	Light scorch

- If the stain is still on the clothes after you have washed and rinsed them, try using a bleach. Read the label on the bleach bottle to be sure it is safe to use on the stained clothes.



- If fresh blood, egg, catsup, or soft drinks stain washable clothes, soak the stained spot in cool water for half an hour or more. Then rub gently between your fingers. If the stain doesn't come out, work a little soap or detergent into the cloth. Then rinse.



- Do the same thing for chocolate, soup, and gravy stains. Let the clothing dry. If a greasy stain is still there, sponge gently with a non-flammable dry cleaning fluid. You can buy this fluid at most grocery or drug stores. Keep a window open while you use it.



- Coffee, tea, and fruit juice stains will usually come out after soaking and rubbing. But, if boiling water won't hurt the cloth, there's a faster and easier way. Hold the cloth over a sink or bucket and pour boiling water through the spot. Pouring the water from about 2 feet above the spot will force the stain out.



REMEMBER

- Don't overload your washer. Each load of clothes should have enough room for good water action. Less soil is removed when the washer is too full.
- Mix small items with large ones for good washing action. For example, put wash cloths and towels in with sheets.